

baptism, eschewed the coarse crudities of Beukelzoon, objected to take an oath or engage in military service, and sought to live in literal obedience to the precepts of the gospel.

Under Charles and his governesses-general, Margaret and Mary, the government of the Netherlands had been antagonistic to the Reformation, whether Lutheran, Zwinglian, Calvinist, Anabaptist. Heresy was heresy, whatever its form, and heresy must be repressed if persecuting edicts of more than ordinary savagery could repress it. Persecuting edicts were, however, in accordance with the spirit of the age, and doubtless Charles and his representatives acted in the conviction that they were serving God and the Netherlands in trying to stamp out the Lutheran pestilence at all costs, even if in so doing they buried women alive. The conviction is not flattering to their intelligence, far less to their humanity; but heresy being reckoned by benighted bigots a crime against Church and State, it is possible to explain how men, and even women, otherwise not lacking in either intelligence or humanity, regarded it as a duty to burn or bury alive those whose only crime was to believe in Christ in accordance with the New Testament rather than according to tradition. Charles and his representatives had, too, as far as was compatible with "the world policy," and with that of subservient centralisation, governed for the interests of the Netherlands. He was a ruler of grandiose projects, of despotic instincts. But he was a Fleming as well as a Spaniard (more Fleming than Spaniard, in fact), and, though striving for universal sway, had the interest of a Fleming in his hereditary dominions.

Very unlike the father in this respect, and in most other

respects, was the son who succeeded him as Lord of the Netherlands and King of Spain. Philip was a Spaniard born and bred, carefully educated by both his tutor and his governor, anxiously fostered by his affectionate yet strict mother, Isabella of Portugal. He was not an attractive boy; was neither ingenuous nor easily moulded, but reserved, staid, melancholy, sickly, proud, prudent, terribly dignified. Experience came early to this strange boy. Regent of Spain at

sixteen, husband at seventeen by his marriage  
with Maria of  
Portugal, he was already a father and a widower  
at nineteen.  
At twenty-seven he became titular King of  
England by  
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